

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program
Regional Water Management Group Meeting**

**September 21, 2022
Zoom Conference Call**

RWMG Entity Attendees:

Jenny Balmagia – Central Coast Wetlands Group
Shandy Carroll – Monterey County Housing and Community Development
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group
Dash Dunkell – Elkhorn Slough Foundation
Beth Febus – Big Sur Land Trust
Alex Henson – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Erik Lundquist – Monterey County Housing and Community Development
Donna Meyers – Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Ileana Miranda – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.
John Olson – California State University Monterey Bay
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
Mark Silberstein – Elkhorn Slough Foundation

Non-RWMG Attendees:

Sherry Lee Bryan – Ecology Action
Cindy Perez – Ecology Action
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Director

Meeting Minutes

1. Brief Introductions

2. IRWM Implementation Grant – Proposition 1 Round 2 Project Selection: Susan Robinson provided updates and summed up the current situation for Round 2:

- The Castroville Community Services District (CCSD) will not add its proposed desalter project for consideration in Round 2 as anticipated; CCSD is seeking other, more suitable grant funds for that project.
- There may be an issue with non-State match for Big Sur Land Trust's Carr Lake project. The total non-State match must be 50% of the total project cost, not of the total requested funds. Because the non-State match is \$12 million, and the grant request is \$1 million, the non-State match would need to be \$13 million.
- The requested grant amount currently (including BSLT's \$1 million requested funds for Carr Lake) is \$3,511,230, whereas the available grant amount is \$3,560,340. The requested amount is short \$49,110. It will be short \$1,049,110 if the Carr Lake project is removed.
- The Region's DAC obligation for Round 2 is \$492,517. The only DAC project on the table currently is Ecology Action's Climate Victory Garden Direction Installation project, with a request of \$296,230. The DAC obligation is short \$196,287.

Available for Round 2:

DAC Implementation: **\$492,517**

General Implementation: **\$3,067,823**

TOTAL: \$3,560,340

Susan asked if California Marine Sanctuary Foundation (CMSF) would be willing to act as Lead Applicant, as they had indicated. Bridget Hoover responded that they are.

Beth Febus, Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT), discussed the challenge of identifying non-State match. Construction is estimated to cost \$13 million, and most of that will be contributed by State grants. BSLT can pull together \$1 million in non-State match (probably for stewardship rather than construction), but much more than that is unlikely. Susan wondered whether the construction could be phased, with this phase costing \$2 million. Bridget wondered whether the City of Salinas could potentially provide match, seeing as the project is benefiting the City. Beth noted that the City has not yet been approached about match. There may also be a timing issue with match: BSLT won't know whether the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant (the anticipated federal match) will have been awarded until probably September 2023. Beth and team will work offline to consider options and report back to the group.

Ross Clark proposed that the four projects proposed for Round 2 by Central Coast Wetlands Group be combined into one project. This will ease the administrative burden for CMSF and allow for greater flexibility in terms of match and project design/siting. The project benefits will remain the same. The Group supported that idea. Ross also offered to contribute some funds to Ecology Action's project, should additional DAC funds be needed. (This may not be necessary if BSLT removes the Carr Lake project.) Sherry Lee Bryan described how the Climate Victory Garden Direction Installation project could easily be scaled up to increase the square footage of landscape projects that they recruit. The water conservation benefits would increase accordingly.

Susan noted, should the Carr Lake project be pulled from consideration, there will be an additional \$1 million on the table... Susan said she had checked with Heidi Niggemeyer at City of Salinas to see if they might like to propose the Closter Park project, which is a DAC project, for Round 2. The City is not interested (they are going after other, more suitable funds for that project). Alex Henson confirmed that none of Monterey County Water Resources Agency's proposed projects are ready for Round 2. But there are other options: Paul Robins noted that the Resource Conservation District would be happy to put forward its multi-year Arundo eradication project (Salinas River Habitat Stewardship Project) for Round 2. Mark Silberstein also noted that Elkhorn Slough Foundation's Ridgeline to Tideline project is scalable – additional funds would enable the Foundation to acquire more land.

Ross emphasized the importance of the multi-benefit Carr Lake project for the Greater Monterey County IRWM Region and offered to work with BSLT to consider options for match. The project proponents (*all* of the project proponents) will discuss offline and come back to the Regional Water Management Group next month with, hopefully, a final proposed project list for Round 2.

3. Other Business. There was no other business.

The next RWMG meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 19, 2022, 1:30pm – 3:30pm.